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MEMORANDUM FOR: ARA - Ambassador Thomas O. Enders

FROM: CA - Diego C. Asencio

SUBJECT: Disappearance of American Citizen John Sullivan in El Salvador

Attached for your information is a copy of a memo I have addressed to Bill Dyess outlining my concerns over the John Sullivan case, particularly the attitude of the Sullivan family, and a proposed press statement.

I believe that we must make every effort to reassure the Sullivan family that we have been and remain concerned over their son's disappearance, and will continue to do everything possible to locate him, or at least to determine what has happened to him. Failure to do this will only magnify the frustrations this family obviously feels after almost three months of basically no new information, and that their frustrations will be vented against the only accessible target, the Department of State.

Although John Sullivan is just one among many thousands who have disappearend or died in El Salvador in recent years, the fact remains he is an American citizen and the only American missing in El Salvador at this time. Past experience has taught us well that the smallest consular case, particularly if it involves the welfare and whereabouts of an American, can quickly mushroom into a international incident and can significantly impact on our bilateral relations with any given government.

It is for this reason I am bringing this case to your personal attention. I believe it is imperative that our respective bureaus coordinate our efforts closely. I know that we can count on your full cooperation in our efforts to locate Mr. Sullivan and to deal with the Sullivan family in a compassionate, informative manner.

Attachment:
1. Memorandum to William Dyess.
2. Press Statement on John J. Sullivan, El Salvador.

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